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**ANNUAL REPORT**

**CONFEDERATE  
RELIC ROOM**

**1983 - 1984**

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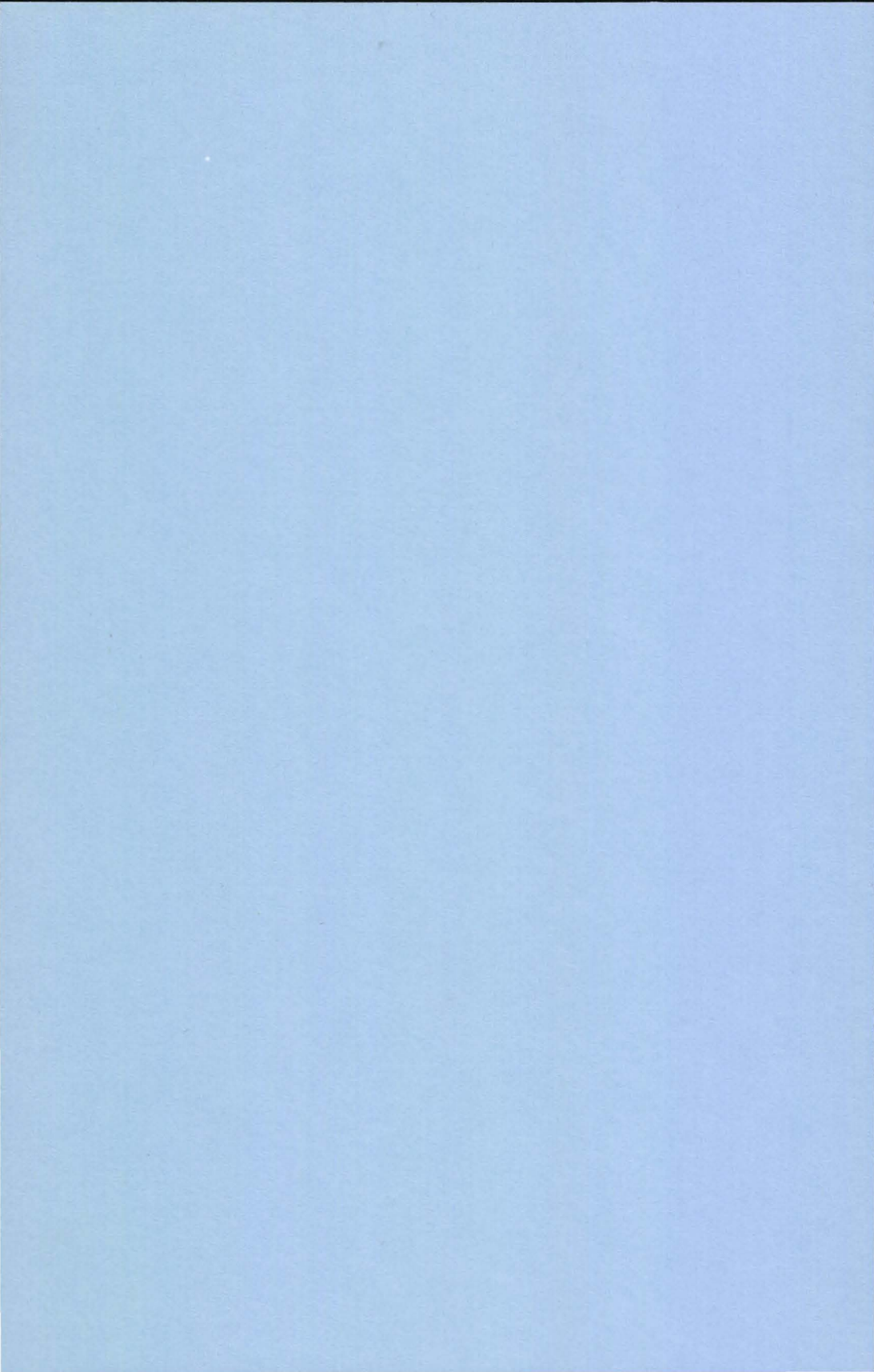
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**STATE DOCUMENTS**



Accredited by the  
American Association  
of Museums

**Printed Under the Direction of the  
State Budget and Control Board**



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## **CONFEDERATE RELIC ROOM AND MUSEUM**

Accredited by  
The American Association of Museums

**DIRECTOR**  
(LaVerne H. Watson)

**ADMINISTRATIVE  
ASSISTANT**  
(Renee M. Watts)

**ASSOCIATE  
CURATORS**  
(A. Lee Mangum)  
(Dotsy L. Boineau)

### **DIRECTOR**

The Director is responsible for the entire operation of the museum. In addition to supervising the every day operations, she is responsible for locating and acquiring gifts; keeping abreast of the latest methods of conservation and display; identifying objects for the public; preparation of the budget request, detail budget and annual report.

### **ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT**

The Administrative Assistant is responsible for office management including secretarial work; personnel records; proper accounting and expenditures of all monies; payroll; assisting in the preparation of the budget request, detail budget and annual report; answering the telephone and screening calls; ordering supplies and authorizing requisitions and vouchers; opening and distributing mail; reports to other agencies (Retirement, Labor, Personnel, etc.); attends workshops and meetings pertaining to fiscal and personnel subjects.

### **ASSOCIATE CURATORS**

The Curators are responsible for scheduling and conducting tours and meetings; giving information to visitors; inventory of artifacts; performing research; acquiring and accessioning gifts; conservation, which includes periodically cleaning firearms and swords, conditioning leathers, and the restoration of fabrics; exhibits, which includes making costumes, fabricating, designing and changing displays, composing narrative, labelling and sign making; keeping the museum areas clean and attractive; carpentry.



## **HISTORY OF THE AGENCY**

The collection was started in 1895 by the Wade Hampton Chapter, United Daughters of the Confederacy. A room was provided in the Library of the South Carolina College to house the artifacts. Before long the collection had outgrown the facility. In 1901 the Legislature assigned a room on the Senate side of the balcony in the State House. Keeping the collection available to visitors five days per week, in addition to seeking additional gifts, and cataloging, had become burdensome for the volunteers, so in 1902 the Legislature appropriated funds for the maintenance and has continued to do so.

Although the ladies primarily were interested in collecting and preserving artifacts from the Confederate period, they soon realized that they should collect from all periods of South Carolina history, lest the items be lost. So by the turn of the century they had expanded their horizons. Being the only historical repository in this area, Constitutional Officers and Legislators placed artifacts in the collection as early as 1901. Some of the early accessions included the vest of John Huger, first Secretary of State of South Carolina, 1776; sections of the stockade of Charles Fort, 1562; a wedding dress made from draperies, 1868; a cannon marked 1778. Letters, seeking return of South Carolina historical items, were sent and continue to be sent to members of the United Daughters of the Confederacy throughout the country. As a result many gifts were received. To mention a few, from San Diego, California, came the Catawba Rifles Flag; from Alabama, the Colors of the Claremont Rifles; from Arizona, a sailor's blouse and two sailor hats from the USS South Carolina; from Maryland, Confederate currency issued by the Bank of South Carolina, 1863; from Mississippi, sheet music, circa 1864, printed in Columbia. Through this association, we continue to receive valuable artifacts.

To date, only \$8,350 of state funds have been spent for acquiring historical artifacts. The collection is insured for \$1,000,000. The current market value steadily increases.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE MUSEUM**

We have received accreditation from the American Association of Museums. Less than 10% of the museums in this country have received this distinction. This demonstrates that we operate on a professional level in accordance with standards of excellence prescribed by the American Association of Museums.

Our function is to provide museum services. We collect, preserve and display items of historical value from all periods of South Carolina history. Additional functions include research; aiding other museums upon request; organizing and conducting tours for school, civic, historical groups and senior citizens; supplying information to visitors and the public; identifying objects; supplying speakers for schools, civic groups and homes for the elderly; making the museum available for meetings of historical and civic groups; inventory; acquiring gifts then accessioning them; designing and changing exhibits. Primarily we are an educational institution and education is the justification for what we do. Our services are for the benefit of our people.

To adequately serve a museum the Director must become involved with other museum professionals and organizations. The Director serves on the following: a Research Fellow in the Institute of Southern Studies, at the University of South Carolina; on Central Midlands Regional Planning Council for Historical Preservation; a Reader for the Institute of Museum Services, US Department of Education, in the Grants Program; a member of the Columbia Museums Directors Association; Secretary of Save the Flags Committee, a group affiliate of National Parks Service, working to raise funds for the restoration and display of two US Flags and a Palmetto Flag which flew over Fort Sumter in 1861.

We hold memberships in and/or attend meetings of the American Association of Museums, Southeastern Federation of Museums, South Carolina Federation of Museums, Columbia Museums Directors Association, American Association for State and Local History and Smithsonian Institution, in order to keep abreast of the status quo in the museum profession.

## **COLLECTIONS**

### **Artifacts:**

These are a primary concern. We attempt to acquire as many South Carolina items of historical value as possible. Too frequently our relics appear in antique shops, many drift out of State. By attending museum and historical meetings, we have cultivated and maintained good contacts and are able to form new ones. Each acquisition must be accessioned, cataloged, inventoried in a cross reference file, then placed in storage. A photographic inventory serves as the only true identification of artifacts. We were prepared to start our inventory

when state funds were cut. Hence this has been delayed, due to lack of funding.

Among our more interesting gifts have been a Palmetto Flag with a red field, a likeness of the flag used by the Citadel Cadets when they fired the first shot of The War, 1861; a collection of 33 artifacts from the USS Columbia, a WWII Cruiser, including the commissioning and decommissioning pennants and an oil painting of the ship; the diary kept by a WWII flyer while he was a prisoner of war; 6 United Confederate Veteran badges; a Confederate States Naval Veterans Home Fund badge; a collection of NASA information concerning the history of space; a Jesse Jackson Presidential Campaign button; a 59 pound artillery shell; 7 complimentary volumes from *TIME-LIFE* on the Civil War Series; 15 copies of United Confederate Veterans Magazines; a color drawing of a soldier in the 17th Regiment, SCV.

#### Preservation

It is necessary to keep abreast of the latest techniques in preservation. Often extensive sewing is necessary in affording proper care to fabrics, including flags, clothing, etc. Swords and firearms must be cleaned and oiled semi-annually. Woods and leathers must be treated periodically. If we know not how to preserve our heirlooms, then we would be wasting our time in collecting them.

The restoration of fabrics is a slow, tedious work. Several dresses were repaired. We will continue work on the restoration of our clothing and flags when time permits. Firearms and edged weapons were cleaned and oiled. All silver and brass on exhibit was polished quarterly.

#### Display

We have the responsibility of telling the South Carolina story through a museum which is attractive, informative and appealing. Our visitors must be impressed by what they see and learn. Display cases must be kept clean and refabricated (covered in cloth) periodically. Touch-up painting is necessary. Props for displays must be constructed. The narrative must be composed for each case, then signs made. All of this work is performed by the staff.

The Lower Gallery exhibits reflect various periods of South Carolina history: clothing, dolls, quilts, sweetgrass baskets, Catawba pottery, currency, stamps, medals, firearms, edged weapons, uniforms, remnant of the flag of the South Carolina 2nd Regiment of Black Troops, raised on Hilton Head Island, and other various types of memorabilia.



In the Upper Gallery we pay tribute to South Carolinians in the military, both past and present. One can see firearms, uniforms, flags, accouterments from the Colonial era up to and including Vietnam. Visitors have shown particular interest in the Space exhibit, in which three South Carolinians are represented. We have the inflight jacket of Astronaut Charles Duke, the first South Carolinian to go into space, and photos of Astronauts Charles Bolden and Ron McNair. According to an Associated Press release, there are 4 Blacks in the Astronauts Corps, two of which are South Carolinians — Major Bolden and Dr. McNair. Lt. Commander Frank L. Culbertson, of Charleston, and Lt. Colonel John A. Caspar, of Greenville, were recently selected by NASA. Of our five astronauts, two have served on space missions — Duke and McNair.

### ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

Primarily we are an educational institution. Two hundred and fifty letters were sent to schools, urging teachers to bring classes to Columbia for educational tours. The response has been good. Appointments were scheduled for school groups touring the museums, in addition to 23 request to arrange all day tours at Columbia area museums. Annually we have school groups from Clearwater, Florida, and Stony Point, North Carolina. We conducted tours for school groups and kindergartens, University of South Carolina classes, Newberry College classes, WWII Veterans, Scouts, Senior Citizens, State Department of Mental Health groups, Department of Youth Services, historical and civic groups, including the annual meeting of the Embroiders Guild of the Southeast. Some of the meetings held at the museum included the USC Medical History Club, the DAR, UDC, SCV, the men who served aboard the USS Columbia, WWII. Seven of these meetings were held after office hours. Three Pinning-on Ceremonies were conducted in the Upper Gallery by the Army ROTC and the Air Force ROTC of the University of South Carolina.

The Director delivered a paper at the seminar sponsored by Midlands Technical College on *The State of the Arts in the Old South*. Five radio tapings, for Richland and Lexington Counties Council on Aging, were made at a local radio station for future broadcasts. Two tapings were made by WIS-TV for PM Magazine.

Artifacts were photographed for inclusion in the *TIME-LIFE* series on *THE CIVIL WAR* and for two covers of *THE SOUTHERN PARTISAN* magazine. A taping and conference was held with a representative of PBS, Boston, Massachusetts.

Two new exhibits were placed in the Rembert Dennis Office Building and one in the lower lobby of the State House.

We assisted legislators, authors, graduate students, the public and the press in their research. Research requests have proved time consuming. We supplied historical information to *CHAB NEWS*, quarterly publication of the Confederate Historical Association of Belgium, located in Brussels. Currently we are planning a tour and reception at the museum for members of the American Civil War Historical Society of Northwest England. We did research for Senator Bill Bradley's office, Washington, DC; costumes for PRT; the Governor's Office; *COLUMBIA NEWSPAPERS*; Company of Military Historians; State Museum Commission to mention a few.

We should take pride in the fact that men and women in other states are representing South Carolina units in reenactments throughout the country. We know of no family ties in South Carolina, so it is a tribute to our state, that they have chosen to represent us. We continue to research uniforms, flags, firearms and battle participation for the following: Palmetto Battalion, LeMoille, Illinois; 12th SC Infantry Volunteers, Elgin, Illinois; 1st Regiment SC Volunteers, Co C, Richland Volunteer Rifle Co., South Bend, Indiana; Edgefield Hussars, Co A, Hampton Legion, Bothell, Washington; Claremont Rifles, Co G, Hampton Legion, Fort Irwin, California. We assisted in the formation of the Pee Dee Light Artillery reenactment group located in Warren, Michigan.

We assist other museums upon request. We meet regularly with the Columbia Area Museums Directors Association and participated with them in setting up exhibits in the lower lobby of the State House.

Upon request we furnish brochures and maps to the Columbia Convention and Business Bureau; Columbia Chamber of Commerce; PRT Welcome Centers; the USC National Society of Alpha Alpha; SC Better Business Bureau; Vocational Association; a variety of groups planning conventions in Columbia.

## FINANCES

During the past year, 67% of our budget was expended for personal service and 33% for operating expenses. According to a survey, published by the American Association of Museums, a healthier situation would be a ratio of 75% for personnel and 25% for operating expenses.

Our Curators should be permitted to attend museum affiliated workshops, but lack of funds prevent this.

A financial inventory, of the more valuable artifacts, is on file at General Services for insurance purposes. The collection, obtained through gifts, with a few exceptions, continues to make money for the state, since the artifacts steadily increase in value.

Because of the economy, many children, particularly those on school tours, cannot afford admission fees. We are an educational institution, so our facility should be available to all and particularly to students. Therefore, we have attempted to operate on a minimal budget, asking only for funding which is absolutely necessary in the operation of the museum.

### **VISITORS**

Our visitors have come from every state in the Union and the District of Columbia and from 27 foreign countries representing every continent. Many museums throughout the country have reported as high as a 25% decrease in visitors. This has been attributed to the economy. We are fortunate in that we have had an increase in our numbers.

**1983 - 84 STATISTICAL DATA**

	82-83	83-84
Visitors .....	62,000	64,000
States & DC represented by visitors .....	48	51
Foreign visitors .....	141	121
Foreign countries represented by visitors .....	36	27
Lectures to groups on tour .....	376	548
All day tours arranged .....	21	23
People present at tours .....	24,000	29,000
Telephone inquiries .....	4,621	5,020
Inquiries by correspondence & visitors .....	4,592	4,625
Hours of research .....	697	681
Books acquired .....	23	47
Museum affiliated meetings attended .....	19	17
State Government meetings attended .....	6	7
Meetings at the museum .....	7	9
Inventory - Hours .....	487	198
Hours spent on exhibit preparation .....	281	293
Objects identified .....	21	32
Hours identifying objects for the public .....	26	53
Conservation - Hours .....	338	427
ROTC Pinning-on Ceremonies (in attendance) ....	256	311
Letters to schools .....	250	250
Senior Citizens Tours (in attendance) .....	193	444
Mental Health Tours (in attendance) .....	92	122

Laverne H. Watson  
Director



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